

Guidelines for Evaluation of Employment Lands Conversion

- Would the proposed conversion reduce the availability of land to support the City's economic development goals?

Based on existing policy, the proposed conversion would reduce the availability of land to meet the City's economic development goals.

A strategic economic plan adopted by the City Council in 1996 entitled "Charting a Course for the 21st Century" recommends supporting the growth of six industry clusters in order to improve the standard of living of residents and provide high quality employment opportunities. These clusters are telecommunications, biotechnology/biosciences, defense and space manufacturing, electronics manufacturing, and financial and business services. Several of these clusters could be accommodated on the Scripps Ranch Business Park site. More specifically, the lot size flexibility and parcel configuration are sought by high-end research and development users associated with the cluster industries.

A recent SANDAG report (1998 Employment Lands Inventory and Market Analysis) estimates that the inventory of industrial land north of State Route 52, which is described as the highest priority for high technology businesses, is about 400 acres. This is a relatively generous estimate, as it includes properties which have been developed since 1998, or are being developed. This same study concludes that "none of the major employment markets north of I-8 have a three-year supply of vacant land at the current rate of absorption." Other industrial sites within this critical market area, such as La Jolla, Sorrento Valley, Carmel Valley, and Rancho Bernardo are nearing build out.

The City's Economic Development Division recently conducted an inventory of available industrial land in the North City, which includes land north of I-8 that is zoned for industrial and research/development uses (currently the "I" zones; formerly known as SR and M zones). The inventory shows that within the Scripps Miramar Ranch community, the subject site is the only known industrial land available to support the fast-growing high-technology and biotechnology sectors. There are an additional 25 acres available in Miramar Ranch North (plus about 25 acres of property which is already in escrow to an end user that is being added by the Scripps Gateway Business Park) and a total of 320 acres in the North City (of which 263 acres are north of State Route 52).

- Does the proposed conversion involve land which has significant size, configuration, or infrastructure which limit its potential use for employment purposes?

The site provides flexibility to potential users because of its size and configuration. Adequate infrastructure is in place to support industrial development. The site has ready freeway access,

although it is not immediately visible from the freeway. Lots 1, 2, and 11 are currently processing substantial conformance reviews with the City to develop under the existing Planned Industrial Permit. Other, similarly configured adjacent sites have successfully developed with industrial uses. The adjacency of other industrial sites allows for a synergy of uses that benefits the site's ability to attract industrial users.

There are grade differences between lots that could discourage a user from using several lots; however, a revised grading plan and/or lot consolidation could address this problem. The site's location across the street from the Scripps Ranch High School creates an inconvenience for either a residential or industrial use, because Meanley Drive is used for the pick-up of students who congregate on the site after school while waiting for their rides. However, the current plan amendment and proposed developments utilize the lots closest to the school for industrial use, so this is not considered a major constraint.

The industrial lots in the business park range in size from 3.7 to 9.5 acres. The Planned Industrial Development Permit restricts users of the site to single tenants (multi-tenant office use is not permitted). This PID restriction limits the marketability of the parcels to the larger manufacturing and corporate office-type users, acting as both a limiting factor, yet also giving it a niche market that is difficult to reproduce on other sites. Removal of the multi-tenant restriction is feasible but would tend to favor smaller users at the expense of larger users which are more difficult to site. It would also significantly increase traffic impacts. The existing industrial lots could be reconfigured to suit either a larger user who requires the consolidation of several lots, or a smaller user who may wish to re-subdivide a lot. Both of these options remain available to potential tenants. Available land to support large users (allowing for parcel assembly of greater than 15 acres) is available in the Scripps Ranch Business Park, San Diego Spectrum, San Diego Corporate Center, and TRW property, for a total of 98 acres.

- Does the proposed conversion enhance or support existing or planned industrial uses? If so, does it provide a positive regional economic impact as well as a net positive fiscal impact on City revenues?

The lots which are proposed for conversion would not be used for industrial support or accessory uses. The conversion would provide an opportunity for people working in adjacent businesses to live close to work.

- If the proposed conversion is to residential, does it provide to the surrounding community a range of housing opportunities as referenced in City Council Policy 600-19, "Fostering of Balanced Community Development?"

The proposed conversion would allow for the development of a housing type and density which is not currently well represented in the Scripps Miramar Ranch community. It would also provide housing for people of special needs (senior citizens, non-ambulatory residents, and people with dementia or memory impairment). However, the units would not provide a significant source of affordable housing to low or moderate income persons, which Scripps Miramar Ranch lacks.

- Does the proposed conversion utilize the City of San Diego Transportation Oriented Development (TOD) Guidelines?

The TOD Guidelines are not easily applied to a single subdivision. The Scripps Miramar Ranch community is not designed as a transit or pedestrian-oriented community. It is primarily a low density residential community, except for the western portion of the community which is dedicated to industrial, office, commercial and civic uses. The proposed development would be an infill project on graded lots within a developed community. The site itself is served by busses, and the proposed housing would be developed with sufficient density to support transit use.